

I felt in need of a great pilgrimage, so I sat still for three days.

Hafiz, Islamic Poet



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Understanding: A Destination



Understanding is one of the most beautiful words. In Arabic it translates “to stand under.” In Sanskrit “to be among, or amidst.” In Greek “a running together, a synergy.” Synergy is defined as “the creation of a whole that is greater than the simple sum of its parts, a working together.” We come across a dynamism within the word that, when activated through patience, the result is a unified objectivity- a seeing the forest for the trees. Understanding is the cornerstone of learning, intellectually and relationally. In truth, it is understanding that “stands under” all of what we do as a people. When understanding crumbles, growth becomes stagnant, and streams of synergy cease, dam up, and take a negative form.

It would seem that understanding has been confused with reason. Reason compares, stands over, critiques, categorizes, and creates either/or opinions. The Greek word for reason is discursive, which means digressing from subject to subject. Reason itself etymologically is defined as subjective, “the reasoning process, however valid, tends

toward the personal and the opaque.” Reason creates division, a taking of sides. How often when difficulties arise, either intellectual or relational, we use reason to attempt to solve the problem. Each person expresses their reason, desperate to be heard. Here’s the riddle. All reasons are true based on the criteria processed through- thus each interpretation is true... subjectively. What is the destination though? Understanding? Objectivity? Beau Taplin, Australian poet, understands this tension quite well, “We are all so desperate to be understood, we forget to be understanding.”

Etymologically, the antonym to understanding would be “to stand over, to divide, to compare, to separate.” Reason, by nature, being subjective is divisive. It is built on not studying thoroughly a subject, jumping to conclusions, and arriving at destination opinion. Here we can easily see how not understanding something would prevent growth intellectually and relationally- stagnation in our becoming.

Understanding is a double-edged sword. Being amidst, standing beside, even better, standing under supporting, is to be understanding. It is the best metric to gauge health and wellness. We are your library and love to work synergistically with you to help you find what you are looking for. Standing under you, supporting your search, whatever it may be. Even in literacy, tutors are research assistants to self-directed learners, not keepers of the keys. We strive to be a place of understanding. Come be amidst us, among us, working together as a community. The goddess Athena will direct us, listen to the howling of reason, let it fall into the dark, seeing objectively, she will guide us to understanding.

Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes Fundraiser



With *Yo-Yo Ma and The Silk Road Ensemble Cello Suites* playing overhead, teams were given sealed envelopes with twelve mysteries, and a tangram tiebreaker, with the libraries corn hole set on deck just in case there needed to be a final showdown. A one-hour timer, projected onto the white-screen, began and the event was underway.

The mysteries began with a secret message that had to be decoded phonically. “You force heaven to be empty (U472BMT).” Next, a medium difficulty circular maze, followed by the dreaded Magic Eye. While each team raced the clock, I went to each table and allowed for one extra clue for any mystery they were stumped by. There were playing card mysteries, cryptograms, a cipher wheel, and even an old IQ Test from the 1930’s.

I just wanted to thank all of the teams that were able to attend the event and those who donated towards literacy efforts in Fulton County. We are truly blessed to have such gracious community.

The evening was supported by Teachers Credit Union and catered by Jarrety’s Place. Teams included The Chamber of Commerce, Split Road Media, Midwest Eye Consultants, Beacon Credit Union, and First Federal. Donations were also received by the Lions Club, the Kiwanis, and the Beta Association Chapter Tri-Kappa. Thank you.

The teams did quite well. Not one team got less than 7 mysteries and the winning team, Midwest Eye Consultants, in theory missed none. The only mystery they missed was my typo on the paper. The boy seen below with the Sherlock hat and magnifying glass neatly stacked the twelve mysteries back in his packet with 27 minutes remaining and said, “Here’s ours. Those weren’t very hard. Next year could you make them harder.” I smiled.



A vintage magnifying glass the prize to the winning team.



Gordon Bohs displays books he purchases with the donations.



The winning team, Midwest Eye Consultants- secret weapon in stripes.



Harry Webb takes a stab at seeing the 3d image in the Magic Eye



Beacon Clue Finders diligently racing the clock, working as a team.



The Chamber of Commerce looking somewhere between baffled and existing.